

Lester Lamon
Knoxville, Tennessee
2013

My name is Lester Lamon and I'm a native of Maryville and grew up in East Tennessee. Well, the Swift story, that I know, is the early part of the story. I don't know a lot about its founding, but I know the context from which it came and the person who was the founder and the original head I believe, perhaps principal, was his title, was a man named William Henderson Franklin. And Franklin was the first official Black graduate of Maryville college when Maryville College was reopened after the Civil War.

The college was destroyed in the war and while it had been founded in 1819, it reopened on a shoestring. Its facilities were gutted by the Union and Confederate troops that had occupied the area. Its students had all disappeared. There were a couple of its former professors who were around and especially one of them professor Lamar was very anxious to reestablish this college. But the problem was, the college didn't have any money. And so he was looking for funds. There was a Presbyterian school. He was looking for funds from within the Presbyterian Church, from large philanthropists. Remember in the late 19th century, America was industrializing and there was a wealthy class that was emerging and a number of these had strong Presbyterian backgrounds. And Lamar was looking for them for support, but he also realized that there was the potential for money from the federal government during Reconstruction.

No one was clear exactly what reconstruction meant, not just in East Tennessee or Tennessee. No one clearly understood what that term meant, as it would apply to the states after the war itself was over. And so, with federal involvement in the South, Russell Lamar realized that there's a possibility of getting federal help and the primary source of federal investment or expenditure in the South after the war was over, during Reconstruction, was something called the Freedmen's Bureau. The Freedmen's Bureau, headed by a former Union general named general O.O. Howard. Howard had actually spent a good bit of time in East Tennessee, by bringing his troops to the aid of General Burnside in the siege of Knoxville. And so he was quite familiar with East Tennessee and especially with Blount County. His headquarters at one point had been in the Southern part of Blount County. So Lamar made contact with him and the money that Howard had and the interest that Howard had, through the Freedmen's Bureau was for the education of the former slaves. So if Maryville College was going to receive any federal money from the Freedmen's Bureau it would have to be with the promise of educating the former slaves. Now the Freedmen or our Black citizens, new Black citizens.

Well, Maryville had an interesting history prior to the Civil War. I won't say it was abolitionist, but it had a strong anti-slavery background. There had been former slaves that had been educated there with whites, not graduating with degrees, but they'd been educated there as Presbyterian ministers and some of them had gone on to do missionary work. I think of George Erskine and a number of others who had gone on to do missionary work for the Presbyterian Church, so it had an interesting, what we would consider for its time, liberal attitude toward race. Paternalistic, not egalitarian, but open to the education of Blacks as well as whites particularly within the context of the Christian ministry. When Maryville opened after the Civil War, during Reconstruction, it I think probably, professor Lamar and the others that that were responsible for it, just assumed that the end of the war and the abolition of slavery meant that things would be different. It wasn't clear how different they would be or in what ways they would be different, but they would be

different. And that these former slaves, now freedmen, soon-to-be citizens should be educated. Should have the opportunity for education, as well as whites and if the end of slavery was going to mean truly reconstructing Southern society then the potential to have meaningful interracial reconstruction was there and the people at Maryville college were willing to do it.

And one of the first students to come when Maryville reopened its doors was William Henderson Franklin, a Black man. I frankly don't know his early history, until he became a student. And when he became a student there, he was obviously a very bright individual and he participated in the full life of Maryville College. He did not have to live in a segregated environment. He didn't have to sit in a separate place in the room. He joined the clubs and societies and I think there was something called the "Reckless Baseball Team" that he participated in. And so he was an active, and though he undoubtedly did would run into prejudice and would run into some discrimination, there was nothing official on the college's part. And so Franklin stayed at Maryville College until he graduated. He was the first Black student to receive a baccalaureate degree at Maryville College. And he went on into the Presbyterian ministry. And he took that commitment to the ministry and to education with him in the founding of Swift. What was, I believe, Swift Memorial Institute at the time.

That became his mission to provide education and support to African American children. Because what he could see around him, was that Tennessee was not rising to that responsibility, in terms of public education. Public education was anemic, I think we would say, throughout the state. But if you have limited resources and limited commitment and you also have discrimination, then the Black public schools are going to be even more anemic. There will be fewer of them, shorter school terms, less prepared teachers and so what Franklin was seeking to do, as I understand it, was as a Black man within the Presbyterian Church to take that responsibility to provide those kinds of resources so that the freedmen the children of freedmen who attended that institution would be able to have access to a life based on education and support

Now, Franklin continued to have a strong relationship to Maryville College, even sitting on the Maryland College Board of Directors in the late 1890's. He received an honorary Doctorate from Maryville College, interestingly right before Maryville College had to refuse to accept any more Black students. It was almost like the faculty at Maryville College were signing off on this period of their development. They didn't choose to do this. The Tennessee legislature in 1901 passed a law saying that there should be no co-education of the races in the state of Tennessee private or public schools. The public schools had been that way ever since the new constitution of Tennessee was written during Reconstruction. But private schools like Maryville College could do that. And some of the places like Fisk University and others white students might be educated with Black students there. But at any rate Maryville had to stop their practice and at the time that they did it's almost like they were saying to Franklin you are sort of the icing on that the cake of that period. And we are now having to close that off and we're giving you an honorary Doctorate. And the process for your outstanding work and the fact that you represent our most outstanding Black graduate. Although they had several other outstanding Black graduates, as well. One of which became a bishop of the AME Zion Church, for example. A man named Paris Wallace.

Well at any rate, when Maryville had to no longer educate Blacks, you can see it presented an ethical, if not a legal problem because they had accepted federal dollars during Reconstruction on the grounds that they would educate African Americans too. Now they could no longer do

that. Were they going to keep those dollars in their endowment? Perhaps they could have gotten away with it, but they did not ethically feel that that was the thing to do, since they could no longer fulfill the promise that they made when they received those dollars. And so when the new policy came into effect, the Board of Directors voted to give twenty five thousand dollars, which was one quarter of their entire endowment. Tiny endowment. They ended up giving that twenty five thousand dollars to Swift Memorial Institute. Because of the work that they were doing to educate Blacks there and undoubtedly did it because of the connection with William Henderson Franklin.

Throughout the South in the years before the Civil War, when the most common experience for African Americans was slavery, there were almost no formal opportunities for education. Education that slaves received or if they were freed, they received from private sources. And the kind of education that we talked about or have talked about with regard to Maryville College, they were informally students, Black/African-Americans were students there. They were often educated by, if they had a master or a patron in the community, they might receive education, but eventually it became illegal to educate slaves because there was the concern that if the slave was able to read he or she would be able to read anti-slavery literature. Because the abolitionists in the North were indeed spending a lot of time and effort to promote opposition to slavery in the South and there were any number of cases in Tennessee, as well as elsewhere in the South, where these abolitionists missionaries or publicist would be arrested for handing out anti-slavery literature. And so to keep slaves, the idea was to keep a slave ignorant of his or her condition, then they're more likely to be a pacified slave. But if they knew, Frederick Douglass speaks of this in his autobiography many times and I'm sure many elementary and high school students have read or are familiar with Frederick Douglass's autobiography. But he talks in there about the revelation when he learned to read that this was the thing that he would never, couldn't be a slave again once he realized he had the capacity to know what was outside. His freedom could never be denied him again. And he of course from that time on became a dissatisfied slave, made the effort to escape on many occasions. That's the very thing that legislators and others in the South would, in Tennessee and elsewhere in the South, would want to try to prevent happening. And so educational opportunities were incredibly limited before the Civil War.

I mean first of all, there was very little public education in the South of any kind. And so it was private, but it became a crime to educate Blacks eventually. And so the opportunities would have been, they would have been ones that would have been under the table, covert and very difficult to obtain. Reconstruction, what did it mean? It wasn't clear what reconstruction meant to Abraham Lincoln or Andrew Johnson or the radicals in Congress. It was clear that the South wanted as little change as possible, so the real question out there was, "How much will and how much determination would there be to change the racial makeup of the South after the end of slavery? And for maybe ten years, the North looked like it was going to impose some significant change on the South. You have the 13th amendment, which was passed in 1865 which abolished slavery. There shall no longer be slavery in the United States. You have the 14th amendment which established civil rights for the former slaves. You had the 15th amendment which provided the right to vote for the former slaves.

Then the question is, would we enforce those? And it's not at all clear that there was a will or the determination in the north to enforce them. I think the people in the South, the people at Maryville College, they didn't know what it meant. So they were willing to take a chance. Where could they get funds to start their college? They were willing to say, alright this is a meaningful reconstruction and we'll change it. Most people in the South didn't want to do that. They wanted

to resist it and they did resist it. You find many instances in which the slave owners don't even free their slaves until finally the federal troops forced them to free their slaves. They certainly don't provide equal civil rights, because you have the imposition of Black Codes throughout the South and especially you see it in Tennessee.

The right to vote. There are all kinds of ways in which Blacks were denied the right to vote, but these were informal and legally they couldn't do that. The question is: What would that mean in practice? And over time, the late 1870s, 1880s, 1890s it became clear that the North was through with reconstruction. It wasn't going to enforce it and the Supreme Court backed that up. In 1881, the Supreme Court said individuals can discriminate on the basis of race. Only states can't discriminate on the basis of race. In those cases of 1881, then so, private individuals could. Then we get the famous Plessy vs. Ferguson decision in the 1890s that says, "Even states can discriminate as long as it's separate, as long as its equal, it can be separate." In that period of 20 years then, the various states in the South, including Tennessee, put in place a variety of statutes which created, on the one hand we would call it segregation. We've come to use the word Jim Crow. In other words, it created two separate legal environments for Blacks and whites. It didn't have to be that way. Reconstruction could have made it different. Reconstruction didn't make it different. And so the South settled into a biracial society that was unequal and that was separated by law.

States could do that, as they develop public schools. But what about private individuals or private organizations which wanted to conduct their activities without discrimination and do it in a biracial or integrated fashion? Well, there weren't very many of them, but we had one here in Maryville which was Maryville College. Are you going to allow that exception when you have said that there can be no co-education of the races in public schools? Are you going to allow private schools to do that? If you're saying that all society has to be divided, that Blacks can't ride even in the same railroad car or streetcar and you're going to say that Blacks can't vote. Blacks can't hold office. Blacks can't eat in the same restaurants. Blacks can't use the same facilities. And you're gonna make public laws about this and public accommodations. Are you going to allow private individuals on their private property to be exceptions to that? Well that's what Maryville College was.

And so in 1901, the state legislature passed a law saying that even private organizations could not provide education to Blacks and whites in the same environment. Now the story as to why that came about, there was a lot of dissension at Maryville among some, many, of the students. As this period of Jim Crow began to take place in the 80s and 90s, many of the students in Maryville didn't like the fact that there were Blacks there. That was bumping up against the trend in race relations in the South. And so they didn't want Blacks like William Henderson Franklin who had participated in social and literary clubs and the baseball team. They didn't want Blacks participating in those, in those organizations at the college. If they were going to be there they didn't want to associate with them in that way. Even in Maryville, the minister of the largest Presbyterian Church began to argue that this is an inappropriate thing at a Presbyterian school in the South. One of the leading figures at the college and a graduate of the college, who happened to have been in the legislature, probably a pretty powerful politician, was opposed to them continuing to educate Blacks and whites. The law itself was known as the Murphy law it was introduced by, I believe, a state senator from Knoxville. But there was a great deal of division about whether this should continue within college and even within the city of Maryville. And so that was sort of the context at which this law was introduced at the behest of these dissenters. And it was forced upon the faculty and administration of the college.

With the end of the Civil War and the freeing of those who had been slaves, who now became freed men and women and their children became free, one of the biggest handicaps in being able to succeed as a free person and a citizen was the lack of education. If you did not have the ability to read and write and understand contracts and understand the things in an average person's life that involve reading and knowledge, then you're always going to be at the bottom of the heap. You're going to have difficulty succeeding financially, socially, culturally. And so a situation in which there is no public schooling, or if there is public schooling it is public schools for whites only, leaves a small population of residents and citizens without the benefits that education gives to a successful life. In East Tennessee, you had a small Black population. It had been extremely important over the years, but it had been small. Tennessee grew from the east to the west, and so the oldest towns and the oldest communities were in the East. Many of the citizens, the frontiersman, the Davy Crockett's and Samuel Doakes and others who came over the mountains brought slaves with them. While some of those slaves moved on or were sold, others stayed. And so when the war was over you have a small but very established Black community in East Tennessee.

When you take a hard-pressed community, hard-pressed financially and they are trying to build schools to pay teachers and particularly if they don't view Blacks and whites as equals in the first place, what is their priority going to be? It's going to be to provide white schools first and if you've got 300 white students living in Hawkins County and 18 Black students living in Hawkins County, you're not likely to spend your money on those 18 you're going to spend it on those 300. So those 18 ended up fending for themselves and if those people in control those people who ran the county, didn't really think Blacks were particularly important anyway, then they're going to be left for decades with either minimal or no education. The only way in which that problem is likely to be addressed is through private or missionary kinds of organizations.

And it's my understanding that the Swift Memorial Institute was supported by the Presbyterian Church and it was a private, I think initially, boarding school for Blacks because if you're scattered out, you can't very well walk 20 miles or 30 miles to school every day. It's a way of bringing folks together, providing them with not only the education, but also the kind of cultural support that rural poor Black children would not otherwise have. I think it's amazing honestly that Swift is still a part of the community. You had many efforts made to start schools. You had, oftentimes, they were called Yankee missionaries that were coming from the north to come down to provide education. You had schools started all over the state of Tennessee, all over the South. And many of them might not last more than one term. Many more of them might not last more than ten years. By 1900, there weren't very many of them left, that were still going because they were expensive. And then public education eventually came in and there was more, if not equal educational opportunities available. So the fact that Swift not only met that early need, but it continued to meet the need during the period of Jim Crow is quite significant.

I don't know the financial resources, the source of the resources, that allowed Swift to do that but it is an institution that needs to be cherished. It's not unlike, I think, the situation today is that for Swift it's not unlike that we think of all the historically Black colleges and universities. When schools were segregated, the separate Black schools were the only avenue for Blacks to achieve higher education. And from that we have some of our major leaders around the country and Supreme Court justices and industrial leaders and doctors and lawyers and people that have just been extremely important in our nation's history. Then we come along with the Brown versus Board of Education decision in 1954 and we're saying that white institutions can now no

longer discriminate against Black students. And many of those are public institutions like the University of Tennessee and they're much cheaper than the private institutions are. The private colleges and many students choose the cheaper route to go and it's made it very hard for these Black institutions to continue, but they have an unbelievably important historical role and probably have today still a critical role to play in demonstrating what individuals can do for themselves when they are denied equal public support. It shouldn't have to come down to that, but it is a source of both pride and accomplishment and contribution that these institutions such as Swift continue to make in our society. There not as many of them as there used to be it's something to be proud of and cherished.

East Tennessee had an abolitionist, more accurate probably, anti-slavery history that is often overlooked. I think you did have genuine abolitionist people who wanted to abolish the institution of slavery for a variety of reasons, but mostly these were folks that either for religious reasons generally either that from Quaker background or to some degree Presbyterian background felt that slavery was a moral wrong. And it was not only a moral wrong and visited upon the Black slave but it was undermining the salvation of the white slave owner, as well. And so you had in northern East Tennessee in Greene, in Washington County, you had a number of active anti slave societies. Benjamin Lundy comes to mind. John Rankin comes to mind. They published newspapers and generally agitated against slavery. Now you had a similar but somewhat a milder version of anti-slavery in and around Maryville, mostly folks associated with Maryville college. They were also anti-slavery and yet the folks around Maryville were a little more open to ways of ending slavery rather than just abolishing slavery. Manumission, colonization, there were other avenues in which they were looking to phase it out. I'm not sure either group, the abolitionist group that were in Washington and Greene County or the anti-slavery group around Maryville, would have been racial egalitarians. In other words, that they saw Blacks and whites as equal, but they did see Blacks as human beings capable of all the rights and privileges and god-given rights as whites. They agitated pretty strongly in the early, well let's say, the 1820s and then own up into the early 30s.

The high point of the anti-slavery movement in Tennessee actually occurred in the Tennessee constitutional convention I believe this was in 1834. There was a big push to bring about a movement to gradually end slavery constitutionally in that convention. Almost all of the supporters were from East Tennessee, but at that point the population was skewed toward East Tennessee and Middle Tennessee anyway because the population hadn't moved as far west at that time. All right it wasn't a heavy population west of Nashville, at that time and so there was a fairly close effort to abolish it, but that movement failed in 1834. And when it failed the backlash began. And the the persecution and the legal prosecution of those who were agitating against slavery sped up. The end result is that most of those folks in Greene and Washington County left. John Rankin, for example, went to Ohio. And if you've ever been to Ripley, Ohio there's the famous John Rankin house sitting up on the hill which was one of the beacons of runaway slaves. It's there and it's a wonderful monument, testimony. Well that was the John Rankin that lived, I believe, in Dandridge perhaps. I'm not sure exactly where but somewhere here in East Tennessee. He left and to do that, a Presbyterian minister the. The folks in Maryville began to tone down their agitation and they became more, I think what we would call colonizationists. They were opposed to slavery but they said the social crisis that would occur if you freed the slaves and they stayed in the South, would because they could not be assimilated they were not socially equal and all this kind of stuff therefore they would have to be colonized elsewhere. And it was that part of that colonization movement that created the colony of Liberia and ultimately the country of Liberia today. And many of the slaves not just from Tennessee but from

elsewhere through the American Colonization Society, the early residents of Liberia came from the United States. So you have that kind of anti slave background in East Tennessee, that's where the primary anti slave movement in Tennessee came from. After 1834 it began to diminish steadily and became, for reasons of safety and all, it became less safe for whites to take that opposition position.

Tennessee, as we probably all know from our early elementary school, Tennessee history began as a part of North Carolina. You know it was across the Appalachians, North Carolina, the western boundary of North Carolina was unclear when the American Revolution was over. And so colonists have begun to push their way across the Appalachians. They came down the Tennessee Valley, the Holston and French Broad river valleys into East Tennessee. Most of them came from North Carolina. They came from Virginia. They came from Pennsylvania. Many of them were immigrants. As they came, particularly those from Virginia, many of them brought slaves with them. Even some of the earliest explorers, the frontiersman, actually had slaves in their party. But so from the very first people who came in, other than the Native Americans who were here, there were slaves. In Black America Black Africans at the time were a part of that experience, but as they were, most of them were slaves and they belonged to some of those early settlers. And as early settlers came in, they were having to clear the land. If you look around us in East Tennessee, you've got hills and you've got valleys and you've got lots of trees you don't have big wide-open flat farms unless you happen to be right along the river somewhere. And so most of the people had small farms. They didn't need, couldn't afford and probably had no more than, you know, one or two or maybe three or four slaves that work for them. And those slaves lived right with the white family that owned them. They worked as hired hands really even though they were owned. They ate the same food. They slept in the same environment. They worked with the same animals. They drank from the same streams. These were early settlers, they just happened to be owned and their labor and activities were directed by their owners. They weren't free to move about themselves and so in East Tennessee mostly because of the nature of the terrain, the way in which people made a living. . . the Blacks that were here lived in small groups. Now you had them down along the Little River and the little Tennessee River and further South and a little of the Tennessee River. You had some bottom lands in which large farms or maybe even we might call them plantations developed. And you might have 2250 slaves there, but that would be very much the exception in East Tennessee. So the population would have been small. The white population would have been much larger than the Black population, because most people could not afford or didn't need to have slaves working for them. They worked their farms themselves or their small businesses or whatever they developed.

But as you move west, as you move across the Cumberland Plateau, the land flattens out and when you do that you have the opportunity for crops on a much larger scale. Your corn fields can be big corn fields. You'll perhaps have the opportunity even to plant cotton. You have iron deposits and you have coal and you have the opportunity to develop foundries. And you have navigable rivers with the Cumberland and the Tennessee, so that if you make crops in bulk you can ship them out. That was always the problem in East Tennessee, because of the shoals and all in the river, of the Tennessee River. It was hard to use the Tennessee River to ship crops out and you had to go over the Appalachians. You didn't have roads. It wasn't easy to do, but when you moved west and you had navigable rivers that would take you out ultimately to the Ohio into the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico, you can grow crops or you can have iron ore and other things heavy items that you can ship by boat. When you do that, you have the need of more labor and so this opportunity for easier land to cultivate and the need for labor and a relatively

small white population meant you had to have some other source of labor. And so slavery was, in the South the way in which that labour factor of production was often provided when large gangs of workers were needed. And so, as you moved into East to Middle Tennessee around Nashville around Franklin, in that area, you are on, even up into Clarksville, if you get to the northern part of the state, of the middle part of the state, large gangs of slaves could be profitable. And so you have a larger Black population.

Now you still have a lot of regular contacts between Blacks and whites. And in and around Nashville, you have a significant free Black population. Oftentimes, those free Blacks were relatives, they were blood relatives to some of the major white families there as well. And you had a sizable free Black population in Knoxville - they often had better access to education, better access to keeping money that they might earn and tended to be a little bit better off than the rural Black population would be, and that particularly if they were slaves. So in Middle Tennessee land flattens out, the need for more labor and larger slave populations.

Now you move west of the Tennessee River and you move toward Memphis. And really, you're in an environment that's not unlike the Mississippi Delta. It's prime cotton land. It develops almost exclusively in large plantation tracts. You don't have the small subsistence farmer that you had in East Tennessee that might only need one or two slaves. And in this case you have large plantations, large farms perhaps hundreds, but perhaps thousands of acres really in which cotton is the dominant crop. And in this instance, you may have hundreds of slaves working on individual plantations and there might be, at most, one white family. And that white family might even be in absentia and it's run by a white overseer. So you, instead of having in East Tennessee where whites and Blacks sort of lived amongst each other, even if one was slave and one was owner and the other was, not in Middle Tennessee, you're transitioning to where you've got a mixture. And then in West Tennessee, you've got slaves living and like you can take Fayette and Haywood Counties. Haywood County, for example, maybe 70 or 80 % of the population was enslaved. So that you have a Black experience there is the stereotyped Black experience that we think about with the slave cabins and the absentee white leaders and the gang labor and working in the cotton fields. Whereas in Middle Tennessee it's kind of diverse. There's some of that in the iron foundries and there's even a sizable free Black population in the urban area of Nashville. And then you get into East Tennessee in which that experience is pretty rare and it's mostly an inter, not equal. And I want to emphasize that not on an equal basis, but there's a more intimate interactivity among whites and Blacks in East Tennessee than you have in West Tennessee.

If no one questions whether Blacks and whites do things together or interact. If no one calls attention to the fact that one person is white and one person is Black, it generally doesn't matter to us. It's only when it becomes an issue and the things that make it now and in the past an issue, so often involve money or politics or someone's self-interest. In the early days of Tennessee's history it was kind of understood by whites that the Black position in America was a subordinate position. But as long as that wasn't challenged, people could relate to each other as individuals. And if you work together in the same fields, if you worked and maybe even ate at the same table, you got to know each other as individuals. And as long as no one called that into question you got along okay. But if someone outside or that person that is subordinate decides that they don't want to remain subordinate, calls it into question, how are you going to deal with that. And it then becomes the crisis in East Tennessee because of the relatively small Black population, these issues rarely got called into question. They did sometimes and there was interracial difficulty when that happened, but let's take Maryville College as the example

again. If no one called Maryville's practice of allowing Blacks and whites to attend college together into question, they would have probably continued it on as it was forever. But because race relations in the South were being called into question, once slavery was ended.. As long as it was this understood position that whites were masters and Blacks were slaves, everybody knew their place. You free the slaves, now nobody knows what the relationship is and what the new place is.

During Reconstruction we thought we were going to reconstruct what a new society without slavery would be. Turned out we didn't do very much and it was pretty much left to the people to sort out for themselves. And the South, including Tennessee, sorted it out based on white power. The whites had the power; economic power, political power and authority. They had the majority of the population. They were the ones who had been most discomforted by the abolition of slavery, so if slavery was illegal and they couldn't have slavery, they had to reinstitute some kind of superior/subordinate relationship and that was segregation. Segregation based on Jim Crow laws. Laws that forced it and so if there were going to be folks who didn't behave in this new superior/inferior structure, they had to be brought into line. Because if they didn't accept it they were like a chink in the armor. You couldn't count on a new racial relationship if not everybody adhered to it. And so when you put the laws in effect, you couldn't even allow some little school like Maryville College with its 15 Black students to continue to do that, because if they could get by with it then somebody else could get by with it and so you had to pass the Marshall college law in 1901 to abolish that one chink in your segregation armor.

So I think, those relationships that we're talking about here are ones that depend on race being called into question. And race was called into question regularly in the South throughout the 1890s in the early part of the 20th century. It was called into question through lynching. It was called into question through race riots. And it was called into question through legislation. And the pressure was put on African-Americans to decide how they would respond to an increasingly oppressive environment. And that would apply to Knoxville in East Tennessee. It would apply to Hawkins County. It would apply to Maryville, Tennessee. Even though there weren't many Black people living in those communities, they couldn't be allowed to deviate from the norm because they would be chinks in the armor of this new racial structure.

It's because in this superior/inferior official set of race relations, Blacks had to define or had to decide really how they would go. Would they challenge it or would they try to build their own institutions in that separate world that had been fostered upon them? Well they have a limited range of areas of that they can control in their lives, but the church is one of those and so you have some very powerful organized churches and church organizations.

Okay two things: Are you familiar with the Church of God in Christ or the COGC Church founded in Memphis. It may be, maybe, one of the largest Protestant denominations right now. It's certainly, they'll operate the largest Black denomination or second largest. It was founded in Memphis at the beginning of the 20th century. It's a Pentecostal Church. It's you've, probably all seen the, you know, when Martin Luther King, the night before he was killed he did his mountaintop speech and he was at Mason Temple in Memphis, that's the headquarters of the Church of God in Christ. That's where that or that is that congregation came out of a separate Black Pentecostal movement and it's founded in Tennessee.

The other area that I think is interesting is in Nashville in the early 20th century you had the publishing boards for all the Black Baptist churches in the country. The National Baptist

Publishing Board. It was an interesting story there. It's split and so you have two separate publishing boards. The money that was generated from that business enterprise, I talked about in the other book the bigger book that you've got. I don't know whether they're still there. I really don't know whether it's still there or not but it's an interesting story, because the publishing center of the network of the Baptist's Black Baptist in the country. So you've got the center of Black Pentecostalism in Memphis and you got the center of Black Baptists which are the two biggest denominations in the country in Nashville. They come out of this same period of segregation where Blacks are taking control of what part of the segregated environment they can control and develop and manage for themselves. Now that's to me that's Black history that's how it's not necessarily integrated history but it's how they deal with segregation. The Boyd family of the National publishing board and the Mason family, Masons for (COGC) for Church of God in Christ and the Boyd's in Nashville with the National Baptist publishing Board. Those are the two families. They became wealthy, prominent families and used their money for founding banks and all kinds of things.

Charles Cansler is an interesting man and I wrote an article about him, at one point. His ties to Knoxville College and his ties to public education in Tennessee at the very beginning of public education, plus the fact he was he was kind of a mathematical savant. He used to, as an early kid you know, they'd throw, you know, multiply 1444 by 1999 and he'd immediately tell you what it was.